



HARDINESS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Stress is considered as an integral part of modern life. The thematic area of coping and stress management enforced in 1979 by Kobasa introduced the concept of hardiness. This Hardiness is derived from existential psychology, which expresses general quality of an individual in regard to stressful life events as agreeable, and considers changes as a normal and interesting part of life (Kobasa et al., 1982). Components of Hardiness like challenge, commitment and control were reported by several researchers. This article also elucidates the implications of Hardiness and the ways and means to improve the Hardiness among youth.

KEY WORDS: Hardiness and Youth.

Hardiness- Conception

There is widespread interest among researchers in the last few decades on psychological stress and on stress experience. Stress is considered as an integral part of modern life. The thematic area of coping and stress management enforced in 1979 by Kobasa introduced the concept of hardiness. This hardiness is derived from existential psychology, which expresses general quality of an individual in regard to stressful life events as agreeable, and considers changes as a normal and interesting part of life (Kobasa et al., 1982).

Suzanne Kobasa (1979, 1986) and Salvatore Maddi (1977), individual differences in personal control provide only part of the reason why some people who is under stress get sick whereas others do not. They have proposed that a broader array of personality characteristics called hardiness- differentiates people who do and who do not get sick under stress.

Need and significance

The modern world, which is said to be a world of achievements, is also a world of stress. Stress cannot be avoided totally in any society. Despite tremendous achievements in science, technology and remarkable growth of the economy, majority of people all over the world seem to be experiencing moderate to high degree of psychological stress in various spheres of their lives. One has to learn to live with it and manage it and cope with it, if possible overcome it. It is undoubtedly youth is the power and future of the nation. Hence, the youth should overcome stress and excel in ones' own life and enlighten the nation.

Characteristics of a Hardy person

Hardiness is assumed to protect the individual from stress-induced illness. Thus, the characteristics of a Hardy person can be listed as:

- They have a positive attitude which can also be termed as "where there's a will, there's a way" attitude.
- They have a tendency to view problems as opportunities.
- They have the ability to "hit hard" the things which are difficult.
- They have the potential to see the smallest window of opportunity even in life threatening situation.
- They have the ability to recover from any painful experience of traumatic nature.
- Takes decisions than postpone or avoid in times of crises.
- They are motivated intrinsically.
- They can cope up with the present technological advancements like internet, mobile phones etc.
- They have the ability to utilise the social media/ mass media in appropriate ways to solve the problems.
- They can achieve their objectives by easy accessing and processing the latest information at the global level through mass media.

Components of Hardiness

Kobasa and colleagues- proposed Hardiness theory: one's attitude toward the events determines stress, not the event. Hardiness has been conceptualized as a combination of the three attitudes (3Cs) of commitment, control, and challenge. More specifically, hardy individuals are thought to reframe their experiences such that (a) these are viewed in a positive light (e.g., as leading to benefits) and (b) they embrace meanings or perspectives which imply that something can be done to change a stressor or to recover from its detrimental effects. Rather than dwell on the negative outcomes of a traumatic event, hardy people may choose more than others to focus selectively on its positive effects. They may tend more than others to attribute positive effects to their traumatic experiences. Attribution of positive effects to traumatic events may facilitate recovery by helping to restore one's belief in the benevolence of the world (Janoff-Bulman, 1992). The three components of Hardiness is given in figure 1.

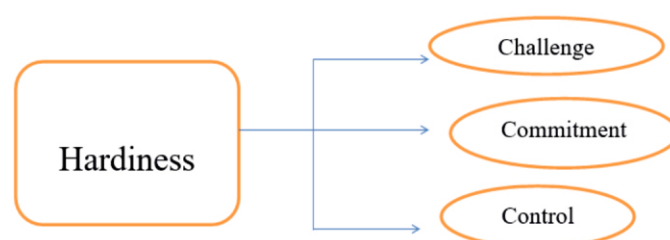


Figure 1-Three Components of Hardiness

Implications of Hardiness in Youth

Youth are the power of the nation they should learn stress management skills to overcome stressful situations in their day today life. The major strengths of Hardiness as a factor to reduce stress, and also as a method of stress management.

In recent years hardiness is investigated as a useful and positive characteristic in the field of mental pathology. Given this issue, the role of Hardiness and beliefs has an effective role in the progression in life.

The awareness on Hardiness will help the youth to cope in future situation rather than feeling on present situations.

Positive thoughts are also the seed for success, Hardiness training may help the individual to minimise the negative effects and turn negative events into positive events.

Hardiness helps the individual to understand their own self and helps them to deal with their own strength and weakness which is very essential for youth for growth and excel in their own life.

Developing Hardiness among Youth

Time management: Time management training is required for very individual so that they are able to utilize the time in proper manner leading to be better self-regulatory practices and less stress.

Exercise: Brain storming exercise can be practiced in schools and colleges for both teaching and student communities to cope with stressful situations and face critical situations.

Services: By involving in voluntary services by youth helps them to reduce stress and enhance the components of Hardiness.

Stress management: yoga can be practiced to reduce the prevalence of depression and anxiety among youngsters.

Cognitive Therapies: The positive thinking can be stimulated by giving cognitive therapies which influence on the Hardiness of the individual and enhances their achievements.

Technology usage: Strategies should be developed for the healthy way of using new technologies and social media and

Educational Program: Educational program can be introduced for purposeful use of new media in the teaching and learning process.

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